

Mr. Lucas Mechem
2341 Taylor Street
Madison, IN 47250
31 October 2000

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U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20785

Greetings,

I am sure that you receive many letters every day, each pleading the case for different issues, but I pray that you view this one as a heart-felt plea, and not just another that you must process before the day your work day is through.

I am writing in support of Docket Number 98P-0151/CP1, which is a petition to prohibit the slaughter of downed animals. The institutional term for such creatures is "non-ambulatory," but the truth is not as scientific. Instead it is that many feeling animals have been kept in such horrendous conditions that they become too sick even to stand. They are often dragged about with chains or pushed with tractors and forklifts, all of which hurt these suffering individuals more. After days of being left there without food, water, or any care, in all the agony, the blood, and the cries of other livestock, the downed animals are slaughtered.

While it seems to me that the suffering caused by these animals should be enough to ban such mean practices, it is also essential to note that these sick, abused animals are used for human food. The marketing and slaughtering of downed animals causes intense animal suffering and poses an unnecessary health risk. In fact, the USDA recently changed its policies on the purchase of ground beef to exclude the use of such "non-ambulatory" cattle. They are aware of the cruelty and contamination that is intrinsically linked to the slaughter of downed animals.

Farm Sanctuary, the organization who issued the petition, and other organizations like it strive to find caring, safe homes for these devastated beings who would otherwise end up as someone's lunch. Please consider this docket, as it could stop so much unneeded suffering and prevent the spread of disease.

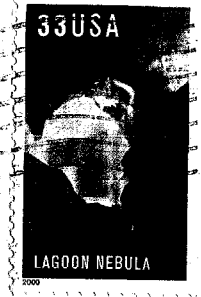
Thank you for your time,


Lucas Mechem

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